

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF ENFIELD

Project Narrative: Redevelopment of Enfield Manor& Extension

March 23, 2022

Developer Background Information

The Enfield Housing Authority (EHA) was formed in 1948 to respond to the need for affordable housing in the Town of Enfield. The EHA developed 456 units of State Supported Housing including 174 Moderate Rental, 200 Elderly/Disabled, 82 Congregate. In addition, the EHA manages a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program with 237 Section 8 Vouchers.

Nature of the Project

The Enfield Housing Authority seeks to replace all existing structures containing 80 units, with two new three-story buildings that will have 99 units in total. Existing site improvements would also be removed and replaced.

For all the following reasons, the proposed redevelopment will represent a substantial betterment for the residents and the neighborhood as well as provide additional housing units.

Project Location

The site is located west of Enfield Street, between Nutmeg Avenue and the driveway to Enfield High School. It currently includes two town roads – Enfield Manor and Enfield Manor Extension. The parcel consists of 11.864 acres bordered to the north by an open field, to the east by Interstate 91, to the south by vacant land, and to the west by Enfield Street and vacant land.

History of the Developer

The Enfield Housing Authority (EHA) has been the local leader in providing below market housing opportunities since 1948. There is a continued need for affordable housing in the greater Enfield, CT area. All of the authority's developments were built using low interest loans or grants from the State of Connecticut. Early development was focused on creating 174 units of moderate rental "family" housing. During the 1960's, 70's, and early 80's, 240 apartments for the elderly and persons with disabilities were developed. The authority also pioneered the congregate housing model for the "frail elderly" by establishing 42 units in the early 1980's and later added 40 additional units in 1992. Due to obsolescence as demonstrated by vacancy issues, the EHA redeveloped the Windsor Court Elderly Housing site. A two-into-one strategy was used to create larger marketable apartments but included a loss of 40 apartments. The development was completed in early 2002. The EHA also administers 237 federal section 8 housing choice vouchers. Over the past several years 15 Veterans

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Administration Supportive Housing Vouchers (VASH) were added. Recently, the EHA was awarded 40 special Mainstream Vouchers.

The residential apartments at Enfield Manor were constructed in 1964 and 1965 for a total of 80 units within 17 one story buildings. The site also has a community/office building with an undersized laundry room. There are 46 efficiency style units that are approximately 360 sqft. in size along with 34 one-bedroom units that are about 500 sqft. The site was developed and is operated under the State of Connecticut's Elderly Housing Program, C.G.S. Sections 8-112 through 8-119.

The Authority has been able to implement strategic initiatives to achieve financial sustainability for six of our seven developments. In 2013 the EHA adopted a Strategic Plan with the goal of sustaining the housing portfolio. By 2018 the EHA had completed the stabilization and sustainability of 376 units of the 456 within the aging portfolio (83%). This was achieved with a mixture of funding sources including grants from the State of CT, energy efficiency incentives and relying heavily on the EHA's financial reserves. Except for Enfield Manor and Extension, all developments are on a sustainable path for at least the next 15 years.

Need for Redevelopment

While the Enfield Housing Authority has consistently maintained the development in a safe and sanitary manner, it has become functionally and fiscally obsolete. The apartments lack size and amenities to accommodate the needs of today's elderly and individuals with disabilities. The original design used modern architecture not in keeping with historic nature of the neighborhood and included both butterfly and flat roof designs. These roofs were later covered with pitched roofs. The buildings are positioned in a manner which places them very close to the property lines. Two of the existing buildings are partially situated within the Historic District. There are only 54 parking stalls with some additional parking allowed along Enfield Terrace and Enfield Terrace Extension. There is no room to expand parking.

The concept of renovations and additions to the existing buildings was studied and determined not to be feasible. The existing buildings are situated extremely close to the property lines leaving little or no room for expansion. The Town is highly unlikely to support the expansion of the non-conforming structures. The existing infrastructure is deteriorating which includes domestic water lines being placed underneath the concrete slab and the main sanitary sewer ejection line is in need of replacement. There are two overlaying roofing systems and environmental concerns that are inherent with developments of this era. The existing buildings will need to be completely gutted down to the concrete block walls to meet current accessibility and code requirements. The extent of the renovations needed leaves very little opportunity for the economy that is typically achieved with renovation. These issues along with several studies strongly support the need for the redevelopment of Enfield Manor and Extension.

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2003 Conceptual Study – In 2003 the EHA performed a Conceptual Study for Enfield Manor & Extension. Initially four solutions were reviewed.

- I. Modest additions to each of the existing units.
- II. Demolition & New Construction with all cottage style units
- III. Demolition & New Construction with Low-rise buildings
- IV. Demolition & New Construction with a combination cottage style buildings and low-rise buildings.

At the time, Option IV., the combination approach, was favored due to the ability to replace the existing infrastructure and increase the number of affordable housing opportunities.

2013 CHFA Capital Needs Assessment & Replacement Reserve Analysis –

The Recap Real Estate Advisors report determined Enfield Manor & Extension to be at-risk. The reported both financial and physical deficiencies. In all scenarios, a significant financial gap will exist for both operating and capital subsidy needs.

2013 Connecticut State-Sponsored Housing Portfolio Capital Plan prepared by Recap Real Estate Advisors – This comprehensive report addresses the challenges of developments such as Enfield Manor. The report does not consider functional obsolescence such as unit size, lack of accessibility, parking, etc.

Information contained within the report includes:

- Enfield Manor & Extension is among of 52 properties identified at “At Risk”
- The At-Risk Current Scenario properties are the more problematic properties.
- Basic 20 Year Capital Needs of over \$2.6 Million, adjusted for inflation at \$2.9 Million.
- The direct subsidy approach is “...neither a sustainable nor an efficient strategy for the State...”
- A better approach is to treat the At-Risk Current Scenario properties as those which need a negotiated workout solution among the owner, the residents, CHFA and DOH.
- The Recap report did not identify 9% LIHTC as the baseline transaction for any property. Leaving the owners to self-select for the more significant transactions.
- Acknowledges that redevelopment options cost significantly more than rehabilitation. Consequently, owners should only consider redevelopment plans if the current property is functionally obsolete or if there are very compelling reasons to pursue redevelopment.

2013 ICON Architect Study – As part of the CHFA SSHP Capital Plan, Enfield Manor & Extension was selected as one of 12 properties for further Revitalization Concept Plan study. It was noted that these are not definitive plans. They were

intended to provide options intended to stimulate ideas and put opportunities on the table for the owners. The Enfield Manor & Extension study explored solutions similar to those reviewed in the EHA 2003 study and recommended demolishing and rebuilding the community. The cottage solution was favored however did not go into depth regarding zoning and wet land limitations & setback requirements. Key features of this strategy include complete replacement of units, improving site accessibility and routes throughout the community, increasing the number of units, addition of a new community building to serve the residents, and addition of outdoor passive recreational space.

Description of Proposed Redevelopment

The EHA is seeking to replace the existing structures with two new buildings that will be more suitable to the neighborhood. The two low rise structures being proposed will be located pulled in from the perimeter and will be positioned to take advantage of the contour of the land and be less visible from historic Enfield Street. The setbacks will be increased to be conform to current requirements.

The total number of units will be increase modestly by 19 apartments to provide additional housing opportunities and financial feasibility. The floor area of the apartments will be increased to 755 SF. The apartments will meet A.D.A. accessibility standards. Each building will make use of common spaces including a laundry room and a recreation room. There will be one central community room. Resident storage will be provided within each unit. It includes a passive walking path to encourage outdoor activity.

The buildings and the parking areas will be outside of the 250' Historic District boundary. 115 parking spaces will be provided. There will be a service road that surrounds the perimeter of the building allowing for access of emergency vehicles. A walking path will flow through the east side of the site to encourage passive outdoor recreation. The site will accommodate the Dial-a-Ride senior bus which currently serves Enfield Manor. Further use of public transportation is encouraged by the local Magic Carpet bus stop. This service connects to shopping, medical office areas and the commuter bus line. The use of the Dial-a-Ride and local buses helps to minimize traffic.

The proposal contemplates abandonment of the existing town roads at the site, Enfield Terrace and Enfield Terrace Extension. The proposed new driveway and parking areas will be owned by EHA.

Financing

The cost associated with the project estimated to be about \$25,500,000. Financing the redevelopment of assets within the State Supported Housing Portfolio present challenges. The project will need funding from multiple sources. Sources currently being pursued includes HUD 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Community Development Block Grant, and other sources.

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Development Team

Developer: **Housing Authority of the Town of Enfield**
Scott C. Bertrand, Executive Director

Design: **Capital Studios Architects**
David Holmes, Principal

Financial Consultant: **Newcastle Housing Ventures, LLC**
Lou Trajcevski, Principal

At Risk Construction Manager: **Enterprise Builders, Inc.**
Keith Czarnecki, Principal

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Local Approvals

The Enfield Housing Authority applied for and received a Special Permit by the Planning and Zoning Commission for the comprehensive redevelopment of its Enfield Manor elderly housing development with the plans as of April 18, 2019.

The application was made under § 3.40.1(D) of the Zoning Regulations, relating to changes to existing non-conforming uses or structures. That regulation allowed the Planning & Zoning Commission to "expand, extend or enlarge" a legal non-conforming use "if it finds that the proposal is consistent with the goals of the Plan of Conservation & Development and is in harmony with neighboring uses and will not be detrimental to the orderly development of adjacent properties." Enfield Manor is a non-conforming use because Housing for the Elderly is not a permitted use in the zone in which the site is located, the HR-33 zone. The existing structures are also legal non-conforming in several ways, as shown on the zoning table made part of the plans.

To reduce the development costs, some modifications to the approved plans have been made. Site Plan modification approvals were submitted to the Town of Enfield on March 9, 2022